



Testimony of Lori J. Pelletier, President Connecticut AFL-CIO  
before the Energy and Technology Committee  
March 10th, 2016

Senator Doyle and Representative Reed and members of Energy and Technology committee, on behalf of the over 200,000 union members and their families in our great state we present written testimony on:

## H.B. No. 5509 AN ACT CONCERNING STAFFING LEVELS FOR ELECTRIC SERVICE LINEWORKERS

The electric utility line-worker is the “backbone” of the utility system. The profession represents the physical labor required to operate and maintain the electric grid. According to the US Department of Homeland Security one of the top threats against our state and nation is “Transportation, power, and other services may be disrupted by large scale cyber incidents.” So how is it we have yet to regulate the minimum number of these critical workers employed within our borders?

We all remember all too well what happened just a few winter, and summer and fall with Mother Nature wreaking havoc on our electrical grid. Just because we call everyone into the emergency operations center doesn't mean our grid will be up and running. We need to act now to ensure our system can be ready and able and this cannot be done without making sure we have skilled workers ready to do the job.

**HB 5509** is smart legislation and now more than ever we need to ensure our safety and security.

As always we thank you for holding this public hearing.

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